The Positive Affirmation of Peace: Education for Democratic Citizenship and Peace

A Thesis
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

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December 2015

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many people who have supported me during this experience, one through which I have learned an incredible amount about myself as a teacher and citizen and about topics that are very important to me. I would like to acknowledge a few of them here.

Dr. Patricia G. Avery, since encouraging me to apply for the program, has been supportive, flexible, and patient. I am grateful for her constant willingness to find time to accommodate my schedule and geographic distance and for how she has taught me to think differently about social studies education. Dr. J.B. Mayo Jr., as my co-advisor, has been an outstanding professional role model and I appreciate his fresh ideas and meaningful feedback. I also want to thank Dr. Bhaskar Upadhyay for serving on my committee and for pushing me to develop a new understanding of research in education.

I am grateful for my colleagues at Salk Middle School who are always amazing. I have learned so much from them and I have grown as a teacher by the great fortune of being a part of a great team. Always willing to listen to my ideas, they have been incredibly flexible and patient with me, and our conversations and work together have helped me immensely.

My parents, through their encouragement and continuous pride in my work and accomplishments, have always provided me with motivation and a desire to do my best. I appreciate their support and the opportunities I have been given because of their hard work.

Finally, I need to thank my wife, Tiffani. This journey would have been impossible without her love and encouragement. Our "coffee dates" were my favorite moments of this project and her patience and sacrifice gave me the space I needed to complete it. Her compassion as an educator always gives me something to aspire to and her love as a wife and mother helps me see the forest for the trees. I love her dearly.

Dedication

To Natalie and Walden.

To my students.

May we provide you an opportunity to create a better world than the one you have inherited.

Abstract

Fourteen years into the "War on Terror", students are growing up in an environment in which war is both normal and something from which they are disconnected. This paper is concerned with the problem of *disengaged militarism* and asks how social studies education and a *positive affirmation of peace* can play a role in addressing it. Focusing on the topics of democratic citizenship education and peace education, the author reviews the existing literature related to both fields and explores their relationship. Also examined in this paper are the barriers that prevent teachers from educating for democratic citizenship and peace, along with the possibilities of addressing disengaged militarism through thematic units, classroom discussion, and rethinking the way we teach about war and peace. The author also offers suggestions for further research and opportunities related to the positive affirmation of peace.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path.
It is not enough to say 'We must not wage war.'
It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.
We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war,
but on the positive affirmation of peace."

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Background

I am an active citizen in a democracy and I am a social studies teacher. Like many people who share these roles with me, I have concerns about the lack of informed engagement in our country and I believe that the classroom is a crucial area on which we need to focus if we want to rectify this problem. I am also a combat veteran, having served in Iraq with the United States Army from 2007-2008. Because of this experience, I have developed a personal connection with the ideas of war and peace and I have a strong desire to see less of the former and more of the latter.

I feel that it is important to share these experiences so that the reader may understand how I approached this paper. As researchers, we value objectivity, and as people, we value honesty. I must be honest and say that I did not approach this project objectively. My experiences influence the questions I ask and where I look for answers. I am biased in the sense that I believe war is wrong and social studies education has a role to play in ending it. I would like to see less war and more civic engagement and this paper is the result of my desire to learn how this could be done.

Overview

I often think about the fact that my students were born after September 11, 2001 and the United States has been actively at war for their entire lives. To most of them, this is "no big deal"; it is simply the way things are. Yet whether or not they see the significance, our present state of global circumstances brings with it serious consequences our young people will face for many years to come. An additional concern is that the gulf between most citizens and the military is wider and deeper than at any point in our history. Because our conflicts are taking place thousands of miles away and involving only a tiny percentage of the population, it is difficult for our students to develop a sense of shared responsibility for the problems our world faces. War has become to our students both something that is normal and something from which they are disconnected. This dilemma leaves me wondering if they will be ready to handle what lies ahead of them. It also leads me to ask: In this climate, how do we best educate our students for a more peaceful world?

I seek to address these concerns through a review of the existing literature on the topics of education for democratic citizenship and an education for peace, and an examination of how we can better incorporate both into the social studies classroom. Through this effort, I will make the case that education for democratic citizenship and education for peace are intertwined and their intersection must become what educators call "the positive affirmation of peace" (King, 1964, December 11). In the first chapter, I introduce and discuss the problem of *disengaged militarism* which defines the world our students were born into—a world in which our reliance on military force has perpetuated

problems that we prefer to remain disconnected from. One way to address this problem lies in how we educate our students for democratic citizenship and peace. This is the focus of the second chapter, in which I examine the scholarship on both education for democratic citizenship and education for peace, and then describe the importance of their intersection: the positive affirmation of peace. In the third chapter, I examine research related to how education for democratic citizenship and peace happens in the classroom and highlight two themes that emerged as I studied this. One is that barriers exist that prevent teachers from educating for democratic citizenship and peace. The second, very much related, is that teachers around the world are overcoming those obstacles, demonstrating that it is possible and giving us opportunities from which to learn and draw inspiration. I also discuss the opportunities presented by structuring social studies courses around themes and essential questions and the important role discussion must play as we work toward a positive affirmation of peace. Finally in this chapter, I examine challenges that teachers face—including controversies over curriculum and patriotism—as they work to implement these tools and I provide ideas to help us overcome these challenges as we rethink how we teach about war and peace. Lastly, before my conclusion, I offer suggestions for further research that could be helpful as we attempt to educate our students for the opportunity to live in a more peaceful world.

Chapter 2

The Problem: Disengaged Militarism

Most students growing up in the United States today were not yet born on September 11, 2001. Our current high school students who were alive on that day were not old enough to remember life before. The adults in their lives who lived through the attacks on 9/11 are largely disconnected from the military response we committed to in the aftermath and that continues to this day. In this chapter, I will outline the concerns that are driven by this disconnect, which I refer to as *disengaged militarism*.

Students in a Post-9/11 World

Three days after 9/11, Congress overwhelmingly voted to grant President George W. Bush the authority to use military force to respond to the attacks. Less than a month later, we began our war in Afghanistan, in which we are still engaged with no concrete end in sight. The attacks became part of the justification used to invade Iraq in March 2003, beginning combat operations that officially ended in 2011, but are again escalating as our government responds to the growth of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The broad powers given to fight a vague threat in 2001 did not expire with the end of the Bush administration. President Barack Obama has not only continued to use them, but has expanded their scope. All of this provides the context for the world that surrounds our students—a world in which we have been engaged in ground combat and airstrikes in lands far away for the past 14 years. War is our students' normal.

This ongoing "War on Terror" presents unique challenges for our citizens, especially our children who are growing up believing that this is a normal state of affairs.

Political scholar and author Andrew Heywood (2014) deconstructs the war on terror in a manner that is helpful as we attempt to understand its broad impact on citizenship and specific effects on social studies education. First, the idea of a War on Terror leads to confusion about who and what we are fighting, with the abstract word 'terror' being difficult to define. Additionally, it is a tactic rather than a specific entity to focus military efforts against, leading to arbitrary decisions about who is the enemy, and broad ideas of evil and fear adding a misleading element of certainty to a complicated situation (p. 303). The paradox of using a Manichean dualism to define the un-definable is dangerous for a democracy and a citizenry possessing the ability to direct the most powerful military apparatus the world has ever seen. It is especially problematic for young people who will inherit this control and who need to develop the ability to wrestle with complexities as they develop their understandings of the world around them.

A second problem described by Heywood is that our simplification of the concept of terrorism causes us to think of it as one phenomenon, leading us to have difficulty in identifying different types and to ignore "the range of political, ideological or other goals that terrorists may fight for" (p. 303). If a goal of social studies education is to get our students to think critically, this is a topic with which we struggle greatly.

Finally, as we think about the origins of the War on Terror and the prospects of ending it, Heywood writes:

> By describing the campaign against terror as a 'war', [the Bush administration] implied that terrorism should be, and perhaps can only be, addressed through military means. Such an approach focused entirely on the manifestations of

> terrorism and, arguably, ignored its causes. As such, it predetermined the choice of counter-terrorism strategies.
>
> The idea of a 'war on terror' may have been counter-productive. From the viewpoint of the general public, it risked exaggerating the threat of terrorism, maybe promoting the very fear and anxiety that terrorists set out to produce. From the viewpoint of decision-makers, it encouraged overreaction and may, thereby, have risked perpetuating terrorism by strengthening disaffection amongst marginalized groups or peoples. (p. 303)

Fourteen years into a global War on Terror with no end in sight, have we made any progress? How much longer will we continue to focus on a military solution to this problem?

Heywood (2014) defines militarism as "the achievement of ends by military means; or the spread of military ideas and values throughout civilian society" (p. 171). When we compare this definition to the current state of affairs, it is clear that militarism is alive and well in the United States. In order to apply this broad definition precisely to our post-9/11 world, it is helpful to look to the works of other scholars. Bacevich (2005), in *The New American Militarism*, writes that

> Americans in our own time have fallen prey to militarism, manifesting itself in a romanticized view of soldiers, a tendency to see military power as the truest measure of national greatness, and outsized expectations regarding the efficacy of force. To a degree without precedent in U.S. history, Americans have come to

> define the nation's strength and well-being in terms of military preparedness, military action, and the fostering of (or nostalgia for) military ideals. (p. 2)

Johnson (2004) described three factors that mark "the onset of militarism" (p. 58). Two of these are very relevant to our discussion, the first being "the emergence of a professional military class and the subsequent glorification of its ideals" (p. 58). A large professional military—as opposed to one whose ranks are filled with conscripts—can be highly effective. Personnel are well trained and always ready to respond to a threat. But this comes at a price: The professionalism that allows for a high level of readiness also creates a disconnect between the military and the citizen. In a democracy, where the military is to be a tool of the people, this is problematic. This gap will be explored further in the next section. The second factor is "a devotion to policies in which military preparedness becomes the highest priority of the state" (p. 63). Military expenditures make up more than half of federal discretionary spending in the United States and our defense budget is the largest in the world by far.

To be sure, militarism in the United States is not a new phenomenon. But our War on Terror has pushed it to new extremes. Bacevich (2005) is clear about this, claiming that it is "simplistic" to hold one particular president or set of circumstances responsible for our present state of militarism, reminding us

> that well before September 11, 2001, and before the younger Bush's ascent to the presidency a militaristic predisposition was already in place both in official circles and among Americans more generally. In this regard, 9/11 deserves to be seen as

> an event that gave added impetus to already existing tendencies rather than as a turning point. (p. 4)

Johnson (2004) also elaborates on this:

> No single war or occurrence caused American militarism. Rather, it sprang from the varied experiences of American citizens in the armed forces, ideas about war as they evolved from one war to the next, and the growth of a huge armaments industry….Having grown accustomed to our empire and having found it pleasing, we have come to take its institutions and its assumptions for granted. Indeed, this is the mark of a convinced imperial power: its advocates never question the virtues of empire, although they may dispute the way in which it is administered, and they do not for a moment doubt that it is in the best interests of those over whom it rules.
>
> The habitual use of imperial methods over the space of forty years became addictive. It ultimately transformed the defense establishment into a militarist establishment and vastly enlarged the size and scope of the role played by military forces in the political and economic life of the nation. (pp. 64-65)

It is possible that Johnson's use of the words "empire" and "imperial" will lead some to question whether he has taken his assessment too far, but he takes care to elaborate in his writing that the United States felt a moral obligation to respond to communism, which was "not an imperial ambition, but it has led our country to use imperial methods" (p. 64). Today, our country still uses many of the same methods—indeed, often expanded—to respond to the threat of terrorism, justifying their use as both

a necessity to keep our country safe and as a moral obligation that we have as a powerful nation.

This leads to some serious concerns about the environment our students are growing up in. They are aware of a vague and perpetual threat and learning that the military is our most powerful solution to our problems. Furthermore, our use of force is possibly inspiring more terrorism, to which we respond with more force, creating a potentially endless cycle. How will we as educators make sure that our students—the future decision-makers of this country—deepen their better understanding of this threat and develop new solutions that might end the war they have inherited?

A Dangerous Civic Disconnect

The present state of militarism in our country would be troubling even if our democracy had a highly engaged citizenry. Unfortunately, it does not, and this compounds our problems even more. As I discussed in the previous section, one of the hallmarks of militarism is a professional military class and with this comes a divide between the military and the citizenry it represents. In his book *Breach of Trust*, Bacevich (2013) focuses on this gap. He writes that soon after Americans allowed their government to respond to the 9/11 attacks with a global war against a vague enemy—a war that continues still—"the nation began behaving as if it were 'at peace'" (p. 31). He describes three "unofficial but inviolable parameters of their wartime role" (p. 31). First, they would continue to live life as normal. Second, they would not pay for the increased costs of war with increased taxes or reduced services. Regarding the economic decisions Americans are refusing to make, Bacevich writes: "Choosing between guns and butter

was neither necessary nor acceptable. To fund war, the government simply borrowed" (p. 32). Third, with a volunteer military, Americans only needed to participate if they wanted to. In contrast to earlier military engagements we have committed to: "Service (and therefore sacrifice) was purely voluntary. War no longer imposed collective civic duty—other than the necessity of signaling appreciation for those choosing to serve" (p. 32). He continues:

> As long as it abided by those proscriptions, Washington could pretty much make war whenever, wherever, and however it wanted, assured of at least tepid popular consent. In this decoupling of the people from war waged in their name lay the Bush administration's most notable 9/11 accomplishment. In place of a Lutheran social contract based on the concept of reciprocal responsibility, a promissory note now provided the basis for waging war—and the people who so casually endorsed that note had no expectations of ever having to settle accounts….
>
> Outsourcing war's conduct to a small warrior class—less than 1 percent of the total population—evoked occasional twinges of discomfort. Could such an approach to warfighting comport with authentic democratic principles? Obliging as-yet-unborn generations to foot the bill for wars in which they had no voice elicited similar expressions of concern. Were such arrangements consistent with the basic requirements of fairness? Such qualms of conscience did not produce action, however. …So as war became permanent and perpetual, it also ceased to matter, as least as far as the great majority of Americans were concerned. (pp. 32-35)

Narrowing this gap will be a crucial element in any efforts to work toward a more peaceful world and doing so will require a social studies education that prepares students for democratic citizenship.

Chapter 3

Toward a More Peaceful World: Education for Democratic Citizenship and Peace

Education and democracy are intertwined in a crucial, but complicated relationship. On one hand, education *for* a democracy requires that students develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to make it work. On the other, education *in* a democracy brings a variety of people and ideas to the table to decide not only its ultimate goals, but also what combination of knowledge, skills, and dispositions can best get us there. Adding the controversial layers of war and peace make this undertaking even more complex and all of this becomes especially difficult in a militarized post-9/11 world. Any progress that we make toward a solution to our problem requires that we deepen our understandings of education for democratic citizenship and education for peace.

In this chapter, I examine the concepts of education for democratic citizenship and education for peace. I also describe the importance of them together and that it is where they intersect that we find the positive affirmation of peace.

Education for Democratic Citizenship

Walter Parker (2003) describes democratic citizens as "people who are capable of democratic living, who want it, and who are determined to achieve it—to work toward the fuller realization of democratic ideals" (p. 1). Empowering students to become democratic citizens is, at its most basic level, the goal of education for democratic citizenship. Parker articulates this empowerment as a transition "from idiocy to

citizenship" (p. 1). His use of the word idiot is provocative, to be sure, but it has power beyond its initial implication of stupidity. He points out that the word is derived from the Greek word *idios*, meaning "private, separate, self-centered—selfish" (p. 2). He writes that "the contrast between the self-centered individual (the 'idiot') and the public actor (the 'citizen') is helpful both analytically and rhetorically, a tool both for more carefully understanding social life and for steering it toward a fuller realization of what it could be" (p. 3). The idiot does not participate in public life and, in some cases is unaware of it. It is the responsibility of social studies education to change this—to guide the transition from idiot to citizen, leading students to become individuals who are able to situate themselves within the larger society. Citizens also understand the importance of listening and deliberating, unlike idiots who only "come to the public square, when they do, to advance their own interests, to *get* something" (p. 11). If we were behaving like citizens, it would be difficult to send our military to solve our problems without engaging in robust discussions about the reasons and the consequences. We would understand that global terrorism—if it is indeed the challenging threat that we consider it to be—will require collective action and sacrifice from all of us, not just a select few. Citizens need to, as Parker writes, "balance the need to enjoy private liberties with the obligation to create a public realm, specifically to create policy decisions about how we will be with one another and what problems we will solve together and how" (p. 11).

As we consider the idea of the present state of disengaged militarism in relation to this description of the transition from a self-centered idiot to a citizen who participates in the public square, the connection is obvious. In the public square of foreign policy and

responding to the threat of global terrorism, the American people are absent, having only sent a message to those participating: Do whatever it takes, spend whatever it costs, to keep us safe. And those participants quickly decided that the best option was military force. Americans approved that option, but have also stayed away from it, continuing on with their daily lives while allowing less than one percent of their neighbors to shoulder the burden.

In outlining the difference between idiocy and citizenship, Parker attempts to develop in the reader an understanding not only of the two conditions, but also of the important role schools play in moving us from one to the other. In *Teaching Democracy* he elaborates on this goal by specifying "the non-idiotic life, the citizen's life, as *enlightened political engagement*" (2003, p. 32). "Enlightened political engagement" is a term introduced by Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry (1996) and later expanded on by Parker (2003, 2008) to describe the elements of democratic citizenship. According to Nie et al. (1996), "political engagement… signifies the capacity of citizens to engage in self-rule" (p. 11). Members of society who are politically engaged have developed and practice the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to participate in the political sphere. But a politically engaged citizenry is not enough. Democratic enlightenment—the other half of the citizenship equation—requires that people develop an awareness and understanding of their place in a larger society. It "entails adherence to norms, including the recognition that one has shared interest—collective interest that may sometimes contradict and override one's individual preferences" (p. 18).

Parker (2003) takes this concept from Nie et al., expands on their important work, and provides, I believe, a much clearer and more workable description:

> *Political engagement* refers to the action or participatory domain of citizenship. Included are political behaviors from voting or contacting public officials to deliberating public problems, campaigning, and engaging in civil disobedience, boycotts, strikes, rebellions, and other forms of direct action. *Democratic enlightenment*, by contrast, refers to the moral-cognitive knowledge, norms, values, and principles that shape this engagement. Included are literacy, knowledge of the ideals of democratic living, knowing which government officials to contact about different issues, the commitment to freedom and justice, the disposition to be tolerant of religious and other cultural differences, and so forth. (p. 33)

Both Parker and Nie et al. define the dimensions separately, but stress that they are necessary for each other. Democratic enlightenment on its own is not worth much and political engagement without democratic enlightenment is potentially dangerous. Parker points out that members of the Ku Klux Klan (2003, p. 34) and "Hitler's thugs" (2008, p. 68) were engaged. When the two are combined, we get a worthy goal of democratic citizenship education: enlightened political engagement.

When we think of what Nie et al. wrote about the connections required for democratic enlightenment, it has become clear that when it comes to issues of war and peace, there is little in terms of shared connections. In other words, the disengaged militarism outlined in the previous chapter poses a direct threat to the idea of enlightened

political engagement. That said, increased enlightened political engagement is a potentially powerful counter to the dangers of disengaged militarism. I will unpack this interdependent relationship between war and democracy later in this chapter.

Beyond enlightened political engagement, we need to focus on the idea of *critical citizenship*. H. Svi Shapiro (2010) writes at length about this concept in relation to war and peace:

> We repeatedly see how it is possible to weave tales that see war as inevitable, the other as one's unalterable foe, and a military swollen by extraordinary expenditures that distort a nation's priorities and investments as absolutely needed. A sad truth of the human condition is that no story that legitimates violence and war has proven too difficult to sell to a believing public; no narrative that persuades people that killing is the only, or necessary, vehicle to resolve differences is beyond acceptance or belief. (p. 154)

Critical citizenship both enables us and requires us to learn from our wars. To question and attempt to understand why Osama bin Laden directed his followers to attack the United States is not to justify what was done. The fact that it will undoubtedly be interpreted by some in this manner does not make it any less important that we do so. Johnson (2004) focuses on the idea of "blowback" which he said is "the CIA's term for the unanticipated consequences of unacknowledged actions in other people's countries" (p. 8). He further expanded on this idea in 2006:

> The concept "blowback" does not just mean retaliation for things our government has done to an in foreign countries. It refers to retaliation for the numerous illegal

> operations we have carried out abroad that were kept totally secret from the American public. This means that when the retaliation comes—as it did so spectacularly on September 11, 2001—the American public is unable to put the events in context. So they tend to support acts intended to lash out against the perpetrators, thereby most commonly preparing the ground for yet another cycle of blowback. (p. 278)

This means that, in addition to educating students for critical citizenship, we must also help them develop global awareness, or global citizenship. This is especially important as the wars we currently fight are far away. Most Americans can go about their daily lives without thinking about the conflicts we are involved in. I will not give the concept of global citizenship a thorough examination in this space because I do not want to shift the focus, but I believe that any democratic citizenship education that is successful at building a more peaceful world will include global elements.

Part of this global awareness is immersing students in a social studies experience that helps them develop empathy and compassion for people beyond our borders. When I think of how we reacted to 9/11 and other tragic events in our country, I can recall what seemed to be a national concern for the victims and worries about our collective safety in the aftermath. I struggle to find examples in the United States of widespread concern for others around the world experiencing similar tragedy, despite the fact that their hardships are often directly connected to our responses to what has harmed us and what we fear. As Chris Hedges (2002) writes in *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*, regarding the role nationalism plays in perpetuating war:

> America is not immune. We mourn the victims of the World Trade Center attack. Their pictures cover subway walls. We mourn the firefighters, as well we should. But we are blind to those whom we and our allies in the Middle East have crushed or whose rights have been ignored for decades. They seem not to count. (p. 15)

How do we make them count? Stephen Thornton (2005) writes that "citizenship education has always been a hallmark of American public education. Americans now live, however, in a world in which vital civic concerns routinely cross national boundaries" (p. 81). Increasing levels of globalization require that students develop a greater awareness of the world they live in. Policymakers, business leaders, and experts in education with great influence frequently make this argument in terms of economic competitiveness, but it is less often that I have encountered the most powerful voices in the room make the case for increased global citizenship in regards to humanity and solving social problems. If we truly believe—beyond rhetoric and fear—that reducing the threats of terrorism and other forms of violence we face is as important as maintaining our economic edge in an increasingly globalized world, then why are we not as serious about developing a global awareness that can help us do so?

Education for Peace

Just as political engagement requires democratic enlightenment for it to be meaningful, education for democratic citizenship needs to have a purpose for it to be an effective way to address disengaged militarism. If increased and improved democratic citizenship is going to help us move toward a world with less war, then we also need to develop an understanding of education for peace.

At its broadest level, education for peace teaches us how to resolve conflict without resorting to violence. Peace education, having evolved greatly over the years to respond to many forms of violence, is difficult to define. For the purposes of this paper, I will examine the definitions provided by several leading voices in the field of peace education in a manner that connects to the context of social studies education in a United States suffering from the consequences of disengaged militarism.

According to Ian Harris (2002), those who educate for peace "warn about the problems of violence and teach about alternatives to violence" and they "adapt their approaches to peace to…different forms of violence within specific, social contexts" (p. 16). To the specific, social contexts we are concerned with:

> At the end of the 20th century, peace educators provided insights into the origins of violence and the alternatives to violence. At the national level, they deliberate about defense and the effects of militarism. How do countries provide for the security of their citizens? What military arrangements contribute to peace and security?…
>
> At the beginning of the 21st century, peace education is being used in various parts of the world to challenge stereotypes where there is a long history of humiliation, victimization, and hatred of others perceived as enemies. (p. 22)

These thoughts are very important in our context for at least two reasons. First, the comment about deliberation on the topics of defense and militarism is potentially part of the solution to our problem and it will be discussed at length in a later chapter. Second, as has already been discussed, our perpetual state of war is potentially due in part to the

fact that responding to violence with violence risks inspiring further violence against us. If peace education, as Harris suggests, can address our perceptions of the people we call enemies, it could be a powerful tool for us to use as social studies teachers concerned about the future.

In addition to providing us with a definition of peace education, Harris (2002) also describes what peace education is not:

> Peace education is not *pacifism education*. The goal is not to make students and citizens quiet, complacent, and content. Peace educators try to point out the problems of violence that exist in society and then instruct their pupils about strategies that can be used to address those problems, hence empowering them to redress the circumstances that lead to violence. (p. 19)

This is crucial as we discuss peace education in its relationship with education for democratic citizenship. If we are to truly use education to empower our students as democratic citizens, we cannot just simply teach them to not like war. The problems we have responded to with violence are real problems that need solutions. Reaching a solution will require that our students do more than learn to avoid violence.

Finally, Harris (2004) provides us with a structured foundation for modern peace education. He writes that peace education "refers to teachers teaching about peace: what it is, why it does not exist and how to achieve it", that students must understand difficulties in achieving peace, and teachers must promote attitudes and teach skills that are peaceful. He also outlines five principles of peace education:

1. it explains the roots of violence;

2. it teaches alternatives to violence;
3. it adjusts to cover different forms of violence;
4. peace itself is a process that varies according to context;
5. conflict is omnipresent. (p. 6).

In relation to democratic citizenship, the idea of conflict's existence is especially important because we need to remember that a peaceful future—both within our democracy and between us and the rest of the world—will never be without conflict. Instead, we need to develop the tools to manage it appropriately.

After discussing the great lengths we go through to protect ourselves from violence, both real and imagined, Shapiro (2010) poses a fairly simple, but very important question: "How strange is it that when we talk about educating our children, so little [about peace and violence] seems to enter our discourse?" He continues: "I argue…that nothing is more important to human beings now than our need for a more peaceful, less violent world" (p. 5). Our society seems preoccupied with stopping—and finding entertainment in—violence, but we do not seem to spend much time and effort developing solutions to prevent it in the first place. Shapiro writes that "educating for peace is always a holistic process. It means recognizing that for human beings to move towards a less violent and more cooperative and caring mode of existence, the broad development of all our potentialities will be required" (p. 9). Achievement of our goals would require major overhauls to the way we construct our school systems, but social studies teachers have the opportunity to make a substantial difference. As Shapiro suggests:

> Finding our way to a more peaceful world will mean constructing a world that is more just, more compassionate, more democratic, and more reverential of all life. Education can and should be an important component in pursuing this goal. What and how we teach our children is surely a critical dimension in the social and moral changes we so urgently need. But it will mean a bold and radical re-visioning of both the purpose of education and the way we seek to teach. (p.10)

And while Shapiro does not provide a simple definition of peace education, arguing that the field is far too broad and complex, he does connect it to the idea of critical citizenship described in the previous section. Citing examples such as Nazi Germany and My Lai, Shapiro (2002) discusses teaching students to resist authority as an important component of both education for peace and education for democracy: "We continue to be reminded of the power of unquestioning conformity to authority in the making of human beings ready and willing to commit atrocities against others" (p. 65). And while this was written prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq and only shortly after the beginning of the War on Terror, his words could easily fit situations that have happened since:

> Again and again we hear the voices of those who have maimed and murdered plead that they did no more than follow the orders given to them....We are witness to the effects of teaching individuals that the meaning of being good citizens or soldiers is to unreflexively accept the decisions and commands of others. (pp. 65-66)

Salomon (2002) has concerns about an overarching definition of peace education due to the various types of violence they are all designed to overcome. He argues that

"subsuming all these programs under one superordinate category of *peace education* harmfully blurs important distinctions" (p. 5). Since the concerns we face today in the United States do not fit neatly into the three categories he proposes, and even he would argue that the distinction he offers between them for clarification rather than application, I will not go into detail about them. In the category that fits our problem most closely, he stresses the importance of challenging narratives that perpetuate violent conflict, which it seems would be crucial if we are to change the status quo. As we compare our present situation with his conception, it seems to fit:

> (a) it faces a conflict that is between collectives, not between individuals; (b) it faces a conflict that is deeply rooted in collective narratives that entail a long and painful shared memory of the past; and (c) it faces a conflict that entails grave inequalities. (p. 7)

Peace education programs that deal with these issues generally "include elements of antiracism, conflict resolution, multiculturalism, cross-cultural training, and the cultivation of a generally peaceful outlook" (p. 7). Much of what this boils down to is deconstructing the norms of viewing the world as "us versus them."

In a chapter that covers peace and conflict education broadly, Kathy Bickmore (2008) differentiates "'negative peace' (absence of violence) from 'positive peace' (presence of institutions and relationship to redress structural and cultural violence and handle conflicts nonviolently)" (pp. 440-441). She outlines three elements of peace education in relation to negative and positive peace: peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace-building. "*Peacekeeping* can create negative peace temporarily by controlling the

violence" (p. 441). Peacekeeping tends to be as far as we go, both in schools attempting to maintain a safe learning environment, and societies trying to protect its citizens. Because it doesn't get to the underlying issues, peacekeeping is not always effective and can actually be counter-productive, building barriers and reinforcing the problems that lead to violence in the first place. Positive peace demands more than this because it "is a complex, long-range goal that implies resourcefulness. It requires both *peacemaking* (negotiation and problem-solving to indentify creative, mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts) and *peace-building* (long-term development of complex social institutions for overcoming exploitation and dehumanization)" (p. 441).

Just like education for democratic citizenship requires a transition from idiocy to citizen, education for peace requires a transition from negative peace to positive peace. What matters here are not the analyses of democratic citizenship education and peace education on their own, but on how they intersect and what happens when they do. This is how we move from futile attempts at negative peace to potentially successful achievement of positive peace. It is how I see Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s call for "a positive affirmation of peace" play out in the classroom and hopefully transform the world we live in.

Intersection: The Positive Affirmation of Peace

Education for democratic citizenship alone will not bring peace. Neither will education for peace. Peace education is necessary for democratic students to learn the consequences of war and different solutions to problems. Democratic citizenship education is necessary for students to do something with that knowledge. Harris (2002)

was aware of this when he wrote that "…study does not bring peace" (p. 23). Without active citizenship, the best peace education in the world means nothing. What is most important is the combination of education for democratic citizenship and education for peace. Harris writes that attitudes can change through quality peace education efforts, but they only generate "understanding and insight. Action is needed to build direct and structural peace" (p. 23).

When we discuss education for democratic citizenship, we must consider what kinds of citizens we want to create. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) present three conceptions of the 'good' citizen: personally responsible, participatory, and justice oriented. While each reflects a different manner in which citizenship is approached in education, all could make a difference with disengaged militarism. Connected with the idea of disengaged militarism, both the personally responsible citizen and the participatory citizen could potentially continue believing military force is the best option to deal with our current problems, but neither could be disengaged. The justice-oriented citizen would not likely believe this. This demonstrates that regardless of one's conception of what makes a good citizen, improved efforts from any of these perspectives of democratic citizenship could make an impact on our current problem. Westheimer and Kahne argue that an emphasis on personally responsible citizenship can hamper the efforts of proponents of the other two (p. 263), the two I also believe would be most effective as we move toward a positive affirmation of peace. They call for more dialogue regarding what kind of citizens we hope to develop, discussing research of the effectiveness and implications of the different perspectives.

The relationship between democratic citizenship and war requires that we look at the relationship between education for democratic citizenship and education for peace. While a disengaged public leads to ongoing war, ongoing war reduces and threatens engagement, leading to a cycle that is difficult to break. As Timothy Canova (2011) writes:

> Democratic citizenship should presume a range of civic obligations, including the duty to become informed and to vote. Yet, Americans are woefully uninformed about matters of war which are now fought with drones, guided missiles, and by relatively few Americans in all-volunteer military and private mercenary armies. This new American way of war presents a classic "free-rider" problem, with most Americans getting the free ride and incurring few direct burdens….This aversion to civic duties has become even more pronounced now as the United States is engaged in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan….Perhaps the most significant threat to the strength and even survival of democracy is as it has always been, not primarily from foreign enemies, but from within, from the complacency of citizens. (p. 213)

And all of this says little, if anything, of the threats to democracy caused by security measures enacted in the name of the War on Terror. The only possible counter to his problem is a combination of democratic citizenship and peace education.

Lastly, the very notion of education for democratic citizenship requires that we include matters of war and peace. Thea Renda Abu El-Haj (2007) documented the struggles of Palestinian-American students growing up in the post-9/11 United States,

describing how they are pushed out of the public sphere as they attempt to develop a sense of belonging. She argues:

> For Palestinian American youth, the failure on the part of a majority of their teachers to question and explore critically the ways that Arabs and other Muslims are being framed as enemies and outsiders to this nation, and the consequences this positioning has for their families, contributed to the youths' conflicted sense of belonging to this society. (pp. 310-311)

Ideas fueled by war and fear lead to the marginalization of entire groups of people. This has obvious implications for students and their capacity and desire to become fully engaged members of democratic society. Surely an education that works toward reducing war could improve this situation.

Chapter 4

Possibilities and Challenges

The overwhelming majority of literature I have uncovered on the topics of education for democratic citizenship and education for peace has been theoretical, especially regarding peace. The comparative lack of research evaluating current practice leads me to believe that education for peace is not happening nearly enough. The fact that I reached this conclusion should not be shocking given the purpose of this paper, but more teachers educating for peace is not only important because of the increased possibilities of moving away from disengaged militarism. A more widespread commitment to democratic citizenship and peace education will also give us more opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of methods and practices that aim to implement these topics. Still, it is important to examine the examples we do have and see what lessons can be learned from them. In this chapter, I will look to the research for both the difficult realities that educators and students face with the topics and also the glimpses of hope that can be found. I will also describe broad challenges that we should expect to face as we work toward a positive affirmation of peace, along with ideas to counter these obstacles. Lastly, I will discuss scholarship that calls for a rethinking of the way that we teach about war and peace.

Realities and Hope in the Research

Given the context of this paper, I will begin with research that is specific to how the topic of 9/11 is taught in the United States. In a study of how 9/11 is portrayed in

high school textbooks, Hess, Stoddard, and Murto (2008) found that, despite the controversial nature of the topic:

> …the overall narrative of 9/11 and war on terrorism is one of nationalistic determination to fight against terrorism and for freedom, supported not only through a narrative style in this vein but also through the inclusion of specific quotations reinforcing this perspective. This ideological viewpoint is rarely challenged or even complicated. (p. 199)

The authors found that 9/11 is presented to students not only as a very important topic, but as "representative of a broader trend that the United States is the nation most often victimized by terrorists, which is simply untrue" (p. 220). Their research also demonstrates that the textbooks "fail to treat events deemed controversial in society as being such" and "fail to help young people do what is most needed during extremely troubling times—which is to think deeply and hard" (p. 221). Hess (2009) later takes on this topic in a chapter in her book *Controversy in the Classroom,* in which she draws on her earlier research on textbooks and adds a comparison with supplemental materials. She is critical of all of the materials that were evaluated, writing "there is an 'American Tale' of 9/11 presented in everything we examined—both in what is given attention and what is left out," but supplemental materials added opportunities for "students to think deeply" and deliberate about the complexities and controversies surrounding terrorism, context, and the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks (p. 158). While major corporate textbooks continue to dominate curricular offerings in social studies classrooms, the availability of better options is refreshing and gives hope.

In another study specifically related to 9/11 in the classroom, Joseph and Duss (2009) described how seven teachers teach about peace in a post 9/11 United States. In this study they asked teachers about their goals, practices, and influences; how they focus on peace in a world dominated by images of terrorism and war; and the challenges they face when their goals are not necessarily supported by the public school system. They found that:

> Despite teaching at a time in which terrorism and war had become national preoccupations, they taught a pedagogy of peace that included recognition and rejection of violence, understanding differences through dialogue, critical awareness of injustice and social justice, and imaginative understanding of peace. (p. 189)

All teachers participating in this study focused on peacemaking and peacebuilding with an explicitly anti-war curriculum that they pushed to implement. They all had "backgrounds of activism in anti-war, nonviolence, peace and social justice activities," but none of them had knowledge of peace education theory (p. 204). On one hand, these teachers demonstrate that teaching about peace in a challenging environment is possible. On the other, we have to wonder why it does not happen more. The teachers who participated in this study self-selected and it is really difficult to determine how many educators teach for peace and to what degree. There are undoubtedly teachers around the country who possess this desire and are accomplishing great things, but how do we replicate that and inspire more?

The United States is in a unique position when it comes to matters of war and peace. We have been deeply involved in war since 2001, but the battlefields are far away and less than one percent of us visit them. With the exception of singular events like the 9/11 attacks and bombing of Pearl Harbor, war has not happened on our soil since the American Civil War. Because of this, war has not been a visible reality in the daily lives of most Americans and it has not been for over 150 years. This could be a reason for a relative lack of peace education in the United States when compared with countries that have dealt with different realities related to war. What can we learn from looking at examples from around the world?

Lanager (2009) in a case study, compares the teaching of war and peace in history in the United States and Japan. He writes that whether you look at Japan, where a central education ministry determines what schools teach, or the United States with its locally controlled public education system, "the history curriculum is a central stage on which war and peace are portrayed for our young people, and it is closely guarded and controlled by national states" (p. 120). He found that teachers in both countries feel pressure "to teach mostly historical facts, find it difficult to give satisfactory coverage to events in which their country engaged in immoral acts, and are expected to teach a curriculum generally favourable to the nation state" (p. 119). He discovered an interesting difference between the two, in which American students tend to learn more about their country's interactions around the world than Japanese students, while students in Japan learn that war is immoral and their country is guilty—something that students in the United States are not taught.

Beyond curricular pressures working against the kind of education we need, there are also political ones. Levy (2013) discusses political education and citizenship activism in Israeli schools, finding that peace education is often avoided, not because it is not feasible, but because of political concerns. While pressure is put on teachers in the name of "de-politicisation," the author concludes that this is "a masquerade for the hegemony of society's meta-codes, and the only politics which is excluded from the school is that which opposes the state's politics" (p. 114). But Levy also found examples of teachers who were willing to push through the difficulties and embrace the topics that got their students engaged in important issues that were underlying factors contributing to conflict, closing with this: "If we wish for schools to be teaching peace education effectively, what's at stake is the extent they allow themselves to teach about conflict, or in other words, to *be political*" (p. 115). In a study of teachers and students in the United Kingdom, Yamashita (2006) found barriers to teaching about democratic citizenship and peace. Often, teachers are reluctant to teach about issues related to war and conflict "because they feel inadequately prepared" (p. 38) and because they worry about scaring children. They also have concerns about charges of indoctrination if they were not neutral about conflict, and fears that they would not know how to respond to students if they asked about teachers' views kept them from teaching about it at all.

Clearly this is not illustrative of how issues of war and peace are taught—or not taught—in classrooms around the world, but they are representative of major themes that I saw emerge in my research. One is that barriers exist, both curricular and political, that prevent teachers from educating for democratic citizenship and peace. These obstacles

will be discussed in more detail in the following section on challenges. Another is that, despite these barriers, teachers around the world are educating toward a positive affirmation of peace. To be sure, we need more of them, but we also stand to gain by learning from the teachers who are already doing it.

Earlier, I documented the challenges uncovered by researchers, but within their work, there were also glimpses of hope. Joseph and Duss (2009) discovered that:

> despite teaching in a particularly patriotic and militaristic time in American society and knowing that their practices certain differed from those of mainstream or traditional educators, the participants did not experience criticism of their classroom practices from administrators or, at the very lease, were not hindered; in fact, they generally felt supported by administrators and colleagues. (p. 197)

Perhaps this means that some of the fears preventing educators from bringing issues related to democratic citizenship and peace are largely imagined and that if they actually tried, they would find it worth the effort. Yamashita (2006) discussed some of these concerns as I wrote about previously, but also found that students are very interested in learning about the same things many teachers avoid. Educators look for opportunities to keep students engaged and might be encouraged to know they "want to learn about complex contemporary issues, particularly war and conflict, and have sophisticated understandings and questions" (p. 38). Yamashita's findings indicate that students definitely have both the ability and desire to take on these challenging and important topics. As the concepts of rigor and student engagement have lately become buzzwords in the world of education, it seems that there is justification for incorporating more

content related to peace and democratic citizenship that goes beyond the need to challenge our state of disengaged militarism. This could be a way to convince decision makers who may be skeptical of the concerns this paper is focused on, but are determined to find a way to increase student engagement and rigor in the classroom.

As we consider student engagement and ways to integrate peace and democratic citizenship into our social studies classrooms, I think it is important to examine the work of Beth Rubin (2012) in her book *Making Citizens*. Building off her own earlier research on civic engagement, she studied three teachers who developed and implemented a history curriculum that focused on civic learning. To do this, two of the teachers transformed their traditional chronological history courses into curriculums that were built around thematic units and essential questions. The third teacher maintained a structure based on chronology, but worked to implement the other elements that the teachers used to engage students in meaningful civic learning: discussion, written and oral expression, current issues integrated into the history curriculum, and civic action research. It should be noted that while the teacher who maintained a chronological outline saw benefits of incorporating the civic skills, the themes and essential questions made the civic learning more meaningful in the other classrooms due to how they tied everything together (p. 40). Designing a social studies curriculum around thematic units centered on essential questions could be a powerful way of bringing peace and democratic citizenship to our students. Rather than the traditional United States history course that would focus on wars as they appear on the timeline that drives the curriculum, students could learn about them together, taking from them lessons that could be applied

to a bigger picture. An example of a unit discussed in *Making Citizens* was designed around the theme of "Conflict and Resolution" and centered on four essential questions: "What is America's role in the world?", "Why does the U.S. go to war? When should it?", and "Can nations cooperate?" (p. 28). Instead of learning about them in isolation as they moved through history in chronological order and risking not even getting to our most recent conflicts by the end of the year, students were able to see connections between topics ranging from the World Wars to our current conflicts, with several in between. Students attested to the value of this approach, saying, as Rubin summarized, they "appreciated how the thematic approach allowed them to see the connections between the different time periods, providing a fundamentally different interpretation of the adage 'history repeats itself'" (p. 32). One student discussed how he was able to see connections that he would not have otherwise:

> The way this differs…is that you get to relate more topics and these issues. Like we always learn like "this is the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, 1960s," and by the time you get to the '70s, you're like "what happened in the '30s?" But this is all like "OK, World War II this happened. And so did this and so did that." Then you skip around 'til like Vietnam and this happened. Then you go back to like World War I and like the way she used to talk she was like "remember what happened in World War I? With that whole issue? Well now it's happening in World War II. Remember what happened in World War II? Now it's happening in Vietnam." She would always relate these topics that we'd be like it's really hard

> to forget. Like you wouldn't forget unless you tried really hard to forget. (pp. 32-33)

Their teacher also described the benefits from her perspective:

> Every test, we give them the same questions. But they have to answer the questions in relation to the unit they just had. So is war just? Is war just in World War I? Is war just in World War II? Is war just in the Cold War? Is war just in the Middle East? Is war just with genocide where we didn't go to war necessarily in Darfur or anything like that so they had to answer the same essential question over and over again in respect to different time periods and now hopefully after the take a stand, they'll be able to kind of connect that and really weigh is war just? Should America take action or in action knowing all the different time periods that they did or didn't? (p. 33)

Through the words of the students and teacher themselves, we can see that structuring a course in this manner can have positive impacts on the social studies classroom in general. Additionally, it opens up possibilities for in-depth learning on the topics of democratic citizenship and peace.

One topic that was emphasized in *Making Citizens* and appeared frequently throughout my research was the power of discussion, especially when students learn to talk about controversial public issues. Describing how we can best educate for democratic citizenship, Parker (2005) identifies "three keys" to promote the transition from idiot to citizen that he wrote about in *Teaching Democracy*: 1) increase interaction

between diverse students, 2) have these students talk about public problems (social and academic), and 3) teach students how to deliberate (p. 348).

Connecting the topic of discussion back to our earlier look at enlightened political engagement, Parker (2008) writes that "two kinds of classroom discussion, seminar and deliberation, emphasize respectively democratic enlightenment and political engagement, or democratic knowing and doing" (p. 71). The purpose of a seminar is to "reach an enlarged understanding of a powerful text" (Parker, 2003, p. 130). The selection of a powerful text is crucial and as we look at the topics we could potentially uncover through a seminar style discussion, there are few, if any, topics that will engage students more that those related to war and peace. Making seminar discussions a regular part of a social studies class—especially one developed around thematic units that are centered on essential questions—could open the door for students to develop new understandings of war and peace. If teachers select powerful texts and teach students to ask good questions, they may learn to see the complexities and difficult realities of war that could help them make informed decisions in a democracy.

According to Parker (2003), the purpose of a deliberation is to "reach a decision on what a 'we' should do about a shared problem" and he takes this further, writing:

> Deliberations are discussions aimed at deciding on a plan of action that will resolve a shared problem. The central activity of deliberation is together clarifying the problem and weighing alternatives. Deliberating public issues is the most basic citizen behavior in democracies because without it citizens exercise power without having thought together about how to exercise it. The opening

> question is usually some version of, "What should we do about this?" (pp. 130-131)

There is much to unpack with this definition of deliberation as it relates to education for democratic citizenship and education for peace. First, this is the very foundation of education for democratic citizenship—students learning to talk with one another about our shared problems. And one of these shared problems, as discussed extensively in this paper, is our current state of disengaged militarism and ongoing war. It often seems that policy makers in our country do not take the time to "clarify the problem" and "weigh alternatives" when it comes to our response to global terrorism and other threats. The public, if engaged at all on these topics, seems to take a similar approach to this situation. If more time was spent in schools preparing students with these types of rich discussion, perhaps the status quo would change. If students participated in meaningful seminars aimed at developing an enlarged understanding of the nature of our threats and the consequences of our response and then in deliberations focused on a plan of action, maybe they would carry this with them as they take on the responsibility of governing our country. I want to reiterate Parker's quote in this context: Without deliberation, "citizens exercise power without having thought together about how to exercise it" (p. 131). This is disengaged militarism. Our military is the most powerful in the world and U.S. citizens continue—whether actively engaged, or not—to use it without thinking together about how to use it. The consequences of this are felt mostly by the small percentage of Americans who will fight far away in these wars, the people who live where these wars are fought, and our children who will pay for them.

When discourse does happen in our country, it is often nasty and it might seem like these topics will be too difficult to grapple with in the classroom. This makes it even more important. McAvoy and Hess (2013) discuss classroom deliberation in an era of political polarization and write that a "feature of the deliberative classroom is that teachers create a class culture that encourages students to share competing viewpoints and to disagree respectfully with their teachers and fellow students" (p. 20). If students are educated within this atmosphere, they stand a chance to develop the ability to recognize and challenge the norms of disengaged militarism and war they have been born into. It is also possible that through deliberation they would reach the idea that war is the right option, but at least they have had to think through other options and—if exposed to a wide variety of ideas—hopefully war will not be the default choice.

Controversy should not be avoided in the social studies classroom. In fact, it must be embraced if our students are to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for democratic life. This is even more crucial if they are to challenge the status quo of perpetual war. Hess (2009) argues that there is an important connection between discussion of controversial issues and the "health of a democracy…because participating in political discussion can have two powerful effects: it makes people more politically tolerant and it causes them to learn more about important issues" (p. 12). Schools are the best places for this due to the curricular opportunities, the availability of potentially skilled practitioners to teach how, and the diversity of ideas and backgrounds that students bring to their classrooms (p. 22). By discussing controversial issues in the

classroom students develop tolerance and deeper understandings of authentic issues and are more likely to become politically engaged as adults (pp. 31-32).

According to Avery, Johnson, Johnson, and Mitchell (1999), "War and peace are just words until children and adolescents engage in conflict and learn how to resolve it constructively" (p. 263). They call for the use of a form of deliberation called structured academic controversy to help students develop an understanding of war and peace. Students not only gain opportunities to learn more about the topics through this method, they also develop the skills necessary to resolve conflict through peaceful means. The more that we have citizens learning these skills, the less likely it is that we continue with war as our primary solution to resolve our problems. Avery et al. elaborate on the practical importance of deliberating issues of war and peace in the classroom:

> Peace continues as long as nations cooperate effectively and manage their conflicts constructively. War results from the breakdown of cooperation and the destructive management of conflict. War ends when effective cooperation is reestablished among participants. Children and adolescents tend to gain an understanding of the nature of war and peace through their daily experiences with cooperation and conflict. (p. 276)

To conclude my examination of discussion, I return one more time to Rubin (2012) and the benefits of discussion for civic learning, specifically on the topic of our current conflicts. One of the participating teachers reflected on her students' experience:

> When we had a discussion about Iraq and Afghanistan, a few kids messed up, or we were talking about 9/11, a few kids misinterpreted who was responsible for

> that. Was it, you know, the Taliban and Osama bin Laden, or was it Saddam Hussein. And a few kids pointed it out to each other. And they said "no, you're wrong, you're talking about the wrong war." And through discussion, those misunderstandings that those kids had came to light and they realized "OK, I'm not correct." (p. 48)

Part of disengaged militarism is a public that is disconnected from our wars, resulting in a dangerous ignorance about our ongoing conflicts. If we just learned to talk about it, we could begin to tackle this lack of knowledge and engagement. All of this makes it clear that social studies education has the potential to make an impact on our problem of disengaged militarism and war if high quality discussion is a central part of it.

Challenges

In a country that is constantly battling over what we teach our students, even issues outside of the realm of social studies that seem uncontroversial often become contested. This means that the concerns of the reluctant teachers discussed earlier cannot be taken lightly. Restructuring our curriculum and infusing it with discussion could improve how we educate for democratic citizenship and peace, but the potential backlash to teaching about peace in a country that has become so militarized must be seen as its greatest challenge.

In a country where our discussions of war—if they occur at all—often go no deeper than to proclaim that we "support the troops," criticism of war can be tricky. The ideas of uncritical patriotism are instilled in our children from a very young age and they

often learn to be celebratory of war through the stories of our military heroes. As Nel Noddings (2012) writes:

> Schoolchildren are indoctrinated with the Pledge, patriotic poetry and songs, national holidays, and carefully worded historical accounts. Most of them are enthusiastic national citizens by the time they enter high school, and many adult citizens would argue that this is a good thing. (p. 53)

These norms are deeply entrenched in our culture and in an age of disengaged militarism, what passes for "engagement" is often a superficial reflection of this patriotism. What educators deem critical thinking may be considered indoctrination by others. This means that there is no easy solution to this challenge, but it does not mean we should surrender.

One possibility would be to bring seminars and deliberations into the classroom that focus on historical figures who are generally revered, but have spoken critically of the very situation we find ourselves in today. James Madison warned in 1795:

> Of all the enemies of public liberty, war is perhaps the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies. From these proceed debts and taxes. And armies, debts and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the dominion of the few….No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare. (as cited in Bacevich, 2005, p. 7)

Or perhaps we could look to a war hero and former five-star general, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who cautioned in his farewell address to the nation:

A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction. Our military organization today bears little relation to that known by any of my predecessors in peacetime, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea. Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. (1961, January 17)

We might consider Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose ideas on war and peace are less known to most Americans, but extensive and powerful. There are countless other figures who span our history and political ideologies who we could look to for texts to discuss in our classrooms and get our students to think critically.

We could also look to the stories of veterans themselves to help our students develop a more in-depth and nuanced look at the realities of war. Countless high-interest documentaries and films have been made that chronicle the experiences—both during their wars and in the aftermath—of our fellow citizens whom we have sent to war. Powers (2007) discusses the power of literature to develop perspective and empathy in relation to war: "It may be that literature leads to a more in-depth understanding of painful conflicts and hopeful responses than historical documents possibly can. For these reasons, the teaching of war literature should be a significant aspect of any peace studies curriculum" (p. 190). Modern classics such as Hersey's *Hiroshima* and Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* are often read in English classes, but could also be studied in social studies and would be especially powerful if combined with the discussion methods discussed earlier. Additionally, initiatives like the Minnesota Humanities Center's and *Veterans' Voices* program—which I have become involved with as both a teacher and veteran—exist to share the stories of veterans with the broader community, including connecting teachers to veterans' literature that allows students to develop a deeper understanding of what it means to have served. Looking to veterans to learn about the meaning of war, peace, and citizenship, will undoubtedly help students develop a more

nuanced and complete appreciation for these topics and would be difficult to classify as unpatriotic.

On the subject of the challenges that patriotism presents for democratic citizenship and peace education, I will close with the words of President Obama:

> What greater expression of faith in the American experiment than this, what greater form of patriotism is there than the belief that America is not yet finished, that we are strong enough to be self-critical, that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is in our power to remake this nation to more closely align with our highest ideals? (2015, March 7)

While educating for democratic citizenship and peace brings specific challenges related to patriotism, it also presents broad curricular challenges that are no different than those faced by other topics within the social studies. As we continue to find social studies marginalized and its content reduced in an era of standardized testing, the same fights that we have been fighting as professionals are relevant to the positive affirmation of peace. We need to continue advocating for an inventive social studies curriculum—rich in discussion—that will prepare our students for civic life. As we do this, we should seize on the trends in education that call for more rigor and increased student engagement as we call for our students to grapple with the complexities of war and peace. This is necessary for social studies and for our students overall, not just specifically as we combat disengaged militarism.

Rethinking How We Teach About War and Peace

Finally, we need to rethink how we teach about war and peace in our classrooms. Firer (2002) asks:

> Why is *peace education* such a difficult task?…I would like to argue that one of the answers to this question lies in the continuous *war education* that youngsters and adults have been receiving since the beginning of mankind, and I also argue that war studies can be converted into a catalyst of peace education. (p. 55)

War is woven throughout our social studies curriculum, especially in history classes. What if we aimed to teach about peace nearly as much as we taught about war? What if we looked for new lessons within the wars we already teach about? The more students learn about the realities of war—the true consequences, not just the lists of battles and the fascinating stories of heroism and weaponry—the less inclined they might be to rely on war as a solution to our problems.

Historian Tony Judt (2008) writes:

> For many American commentators and policymakers the message of the twentieth century is that war works. Hence the widespread enthusiasm for our war on Iraq in 2003 (despite strong opposition to it in most other countries). For Washington, war remains an option—on that occasion the first option. For the rest of the developed world it has become a last resort. (p. 18)

Bacevich (2012) quotes Judt in an essay that challenges historians to lead a rethinking of the lessons that we take away from World War II. He contends that:

> With the possible exception of Israel, the United States today is the only advanced democracy in which belief in war's efficacy continues to enjoy widespread acceptance. Others—the citizens of Great Britain and France, of Germany and Japan—took from the twentieth century a different lesson: War devastates. It impoverishes. It coarsens. Even when seemingly necessary or justified, it entails brutality, barbarism, and the killing of innocents. To choose war is to leap into the dark, entrusting the nation's fate to forces beyond human control.
>
> Americans persist in believing otherwise. That belief manifests itself in a number of ways, not least in a pronounced willingness to invest in, maintain, and employ military power. (p. 334)

The United States, having escaped widespread destruction on the home front and emerging from World War II as victorious has played a pivotal role in generating this widespread belief in the efficacy of war. Bacevich argues that we need to both understand the differences between that war and our current conflicts when we attempt to draw analogies between the two and acknowledge that the narratives about World War II that have become engrained in the American psyche are not always as positive as we want to believe. Increasing opportunities for students to conduct their own historical inquiry, rather than simply regurgitating the facts and narratives that we feed them could be largely beneficial as we rethink the lessons we draw from the past. This could potentially become more powerful in social studies classes where wars are not studied in isolation, but in thematic units that are heavy in discussion and allow for a critical examination and comparison with our present state of affairs.

For teachers, challenging the narratives about wars—both past and present—will be difficult work, but the stakes are too high to avoid it. As Noguera and Cohen (2007) argue, "Even if you are uncomfortable speaking out for or against the war, it is important to understand that in times such as these we cannot pretend that education is apolitical work" (p. 25). Even if we are not explicitly taking a stand on our current wars, the decision as to whether or not we examine them in our classrooms is a political decision. Avoiding these discussions because we are uncomfortable with them is implicitly endorsing our state of disengaged militarism. Noguera and Cohen continue speaking to the importance of this:

> Unlike most military superpowers of the past, the United States is a democracy, and the results of our elections can influence the global policies we pursue. Since the rest of the world cannot vote in our elections, even though their fate may be determined by the outcomes, it is up to us, as citizens and as educators, to ensure that our teaching fosters the kind of informed debate and discussion that is necessary for the functioning of a healthy democracy. (p. 28)

Indeed, it is up to as, as citizens and as educators, to ensure that our teaching changes the status quo of perpetual war from which we are disengaged. Indeed, it is up to us, as citizens and as educators, to ensure that our teaching prepares students for democratic citizenship and peace.

Chapter 5

Further Research

It is clear that more research needs to be conducted in this area. In my work, I found several areas that would benefit from further study as we try to understand how we can work toward a positive affirmation of peace.

There is much more work to be done related to the conceptualization of peace education and even more in relation to its practice. Most of the research I was able to find was conducted during and shortly after the end of the Cold War. The primary concern that framed much of this work was the nuclear threat. We need to learn more about how our current understandings of peace education needs to adapt to our present concerns about global terrorism. Furthermore, far more research on the topic has been conducted in other parts of the world that have had to deal with harsher realities of war than we do here in the United States where we are fighting wars, but are disconnected from them. We need to learn more about peace education efforts in the United States and how they compare and contrast with efforts elsewhere.

Within the social studies disciplines, I focused primarily on civics and briefly touched on history. It would be interesting to learn more about the roles and potential impacts of geography and economics in the positive affirmation of peace. While I believe that all of the areas of social studies are connected, each disciplinary lens could add new layers, present new questions to ask, and provide different solutions to our problem of disengaged militarism.

Peace education is very broad, with experts concentrating on all forms of violence. The context of this paper forced me to focus on peace education as it specifically relates to war, but as we look for new opportunities to bring it into our schools, it might be helpful to learn more from scholars who have connected the different visions into a more holistic form of peace education. Problems of school violence and bullying are pressing concerns to the majority of educators and students, probably more so than war in terms of their daily experiences. If peace education can offer effective solutions to these problems, we could possibly convince more educators to take it seriously.

If we want education for democratic citizenship and peace to effectively address the problems of disengaged militarism, we need it to reach the masses. This will require us to influence public attitudes, empower current teachers, and evaluate how we are training teacher candidates. More research needs to be conducted to learn how we can best do these things. Personally, having started with this project, I feel that I have a role to play in this. I want to continue deepening my own understandings of democratic citizenship and peace education, along with their intersection and the practice of discussion so that I can be a part of the solution.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The problem of disengaged militarism is real, but the social studies, through education for democratic citizenship and peace—the positive affirmation of peace—can play a major role in addressing it. Powerful thematic units that connect ideas with robust discussion and rethinking the way we teach about war and peace are practical ways that we can do this. To say that bringing an end to war through social studies education will be a difficult challenge is an obvious understatement. To say that this paper gets us closer discredits those who have worked so hard before me. But it is a start for me as a researcher and educator to advance the important work that needs to be done.

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